

Abstract for:

The Construction of Partisanship and Identity in German Soccer Sportscasts

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The construction of partisanship and identity in discourse has been well-documented in linguistic research. Through the means of discourse analysis, this study takes a closer look at these processes focusing on data obtained from live radio sportscasts of German soccer games. Observations from an earlier study by Hansen (1999) are used as a starting point for an analysis within a theoretical framework guided predominantly by findings of research on language use in (spoken) media (Brown 1996; Kuiper 1996; Leitner 1983, 1997) and the linguistic expression of identity (Antaki and Widdicombe 1998; Bell, 2001; Coupland 2001, 2007; Eckert 2000, 2001, etc.). This theoretical framework provides the basis for an examination of the corpus relying on a methodology employing principles of Discourse Analysis. The argument put forward here is that in the given case, the construction of partisanship and identity is relatively covert. While the sports commentators might have personal connections with a specific soccer team or a regional affiliation, they seem to aim at achieving a high degree of neutrality. The narratives they produce on the radio are influenced by the events on the soccer field, the requirements of their job as radio commentators, their own identity, and their awareness of their audience.

Key words:

Partisanship, identity, soccer, football, sportscasts, broadcasts, radio, Bundesligakonferenz, audience, discourse analysis